

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please delete the section entitled BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS, which begins on page 3, line 13, and replace it with the following replacement section:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a side view of the hitch in a hitch assembly according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Fig [[1A]] 2 is an exploded side view of the hitch shown in Fig. 1, with the stabilizer rotated 90 degrees for illustrative purposes.

FIG. [[2]] 3 is a top view of the hitch shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. [[3]] 4 is a side view of a hitch pivot in the hitch assembly of the preferred embodiment.

FIG. [[4]] 5 is a top view of the hitch pivot of FIG. [[3]] 4.

FIG. [[5]] 6 is a side view showing the hitch of FIGS. 1 and 2 1-3 coupled to the hitch pivot of FIGS. 3 and 4 4 and 5.

FIG. [[6]] 7 is a top view of the coupled hitch and hitch pivot of FIG. [[5]] 6.

FIG. [[7]] 8 is a top view showing the hitch assembly of the present invention about to be hitched to a tractor.

FIG. [[8]] 9 shows the hitch assembly of FIG. [[7]] 8 coupled to the drawbar of the tractor.

FIG. [[9]] 10 shows the lift arms of the tractor pivoted outward and an adjustable hitch stabilizer of the hitch assembly sliding forward into a position to engage the lift arms.

FIG. [[10]] 11 shows the hitch stabilizer of the hitch assembly coupled to the lift arms of the tractor.

~~FIGS. 11–21 are various color photographs depicting the hitch assembly of FIGS. 1–10 coupling a towed implement, in this case a sprayer, to a towing vehicle, in this case a Ford agricultural tractor.~~

FIG. 12 is a perspective view of a tractor hitched to a towed implement using the hitch assembly of the present invention.

FIG. 13 is a perspective view of the tractor, implement, and hitch assembly of FIG. 12 with the tractor turned at an angle with respect to the towed implement.

FIG. 14 is another perspective view of the tractor, implement, and hitch assembly of FIG. 12 with the tractor turned at an angle with respect to the towed implement.

Please delete the two paragraphs at page 4, line 16, through page 5, line 6, and replace them with the following two replacement paragraphs:

Referring now to the drawings, in which like numerals indicate like elements throughout the several views, FIGS. [[1–4]] 1–5 illustrate ~~the a~~ hitch 10 and ~~the a~~ hitch pivot 12. As will be seen, the hitch 10 provides a laterally rigid connection to the drawbar and lift arms of an agricultural tractor, while the hitch pivot 12 provides a pivotable connection between the rear of the hitch 10 and a towed implement.

Referring first to FIGS. 1 and 2, the hitch 10 includes an elongated lower hitch tube 20. A clevis bar 22 is provided at the forward end of the lower hitch tube 20. Slots 23 through both sides of the clevis bar are adapted to receive a hitch pin to couple the forward end of the hitch 10 to the drawbar of a tractor. The slots 23 preferably are elongated on the lengthwise dimension of the clevis bar 22 to prevent subjecting the hitch pin to a shearing force when the tractor tows the towed implement on hilly terrain.

Please delete the three paragraphs on page 6, line 5, through page 7, line 21, and replace them with the following three replacement paragraphs:

With further reference to FIGS. 4-and-2 1-3, a hitch stabilizer 40 is slidably and rotatably mounted to the forward portion of the lower hitch tube 20 between the clevis bar 22 and the upright frame members 24. The hitch stabilizer 40 has a longitudinal axis which extends transverse to the longitudinal axis of the lower hitch tube 20. The hitch stabilizer 40 comprises a central stabilizer tube 42 which is slidably and rotatably mounted to the forward portion of the lower hitch tube 20. Hitch stabilizer wings 44 are connected to and extend laterally from the central stabilizer tube 42. A lift pin 46 extends outwardly from the outer end of each hitch stabilizer wing 44. The lift pins 46 couple the lift arms of a tractor to the stabilizer 40, as discussed below.

Referring now to FIGS. 3-and 4 and 5, the hitch pivot 12 comprises a transversely elongated main frame member 50. A pair of upright frame members 54 is mounted at intermediate locations on the main frame member 50 and extend upward from the main frame member. A stop tube 56 is disposed atop each of the upright frame members 54. The forward edge 57 of each stop tube 56 is angled. When the hitch pivot 12 is attached to the hitch 10, the stop tubes 56 limit the range of rotation of the hitch pivot 12 (and hence the towed implement) with respect to the hitch (and hence the towing tractor).

An upper frame member 58 is welded between the upright frame members 54. Lock pin 52 is mounted to the main frame member 50 substantially at a level corresponding to the lock pin 38 on the upper hitch tube to provide a means of attaching a transport bar 39 to the hitch pivot 12 for purposes of transporting the implement by means other than the tractor, e.g., a truck to move the implement from one location to another. A first pivot plate 60 is mounted to the upper edge of the upper frame member 58 and extends forward therefrom. A second pivot plate 61 is

mounted to the lower edge of the upper frame member 58 and extends forward therefrom in parallel, spaced-apart relation to the first pivot plate 60. Similarly, a third pivot plate 62 is mounted to the upper edge of the main frame member 50 and extends forward therefrom, while a fourth pivot plate 63 is mounted to the lower edge of the main frame member 50 and extends forward therefrom in parallel, spaced-apart relation to the third pivot plate 62. Coaxial, vertically aligned openings 64 (Fig. [[4]] 5) are formed in the four pivot plates 60–63. Nuts 66 are welded to the upper surface of the first pivot plate and to the lower surface of the fourth pivot plate in coaxial alignment with the openings 64 to provide a means for securing bolts to the pivot plates.

Please delete the paragraph found on page 8, lines 10-22, and replace it with the following replacement paragraph:

FIGS. 5 and 6 and 7 depict the hitch 10 mounted to the hitch pivot 12 to form a hitch assembly 80. The rearward end of the upper hitch tube 26 of the hitch 10 is received between the first and second pivot plates 60, 61 of the hitch pivot 12. The opening 32 in the upper hitch tube 26 aligns with the openings 64 in the first and second pivot plates 60, 61. A bolt 65 can be inserted from the bottom, through the aligned openings, and threaded into the nut 66 welded to the upper surface of the first pivot plate. Similarly, the rearward end of the lower hitch tube 20 of the hitch 10 is received between the third and fourth pivot plates 62, 63 of the hitch pivot 12. The opening 34 in the lower hitch tube 20 aligns with the openings 64 in the third and fourth pivot plates 62, 63. A bolt 67 can be inserted from the top, through the aligned openings, and threaded into the nut 66 welded to the lower surface of the fourth pivot plate.

Please delete the paragraph found on page 9, lines 3-14, and replace it with the following replacement paragraph:

FIGS. [[7-10]] 8-11 illustrate the coupling of the hitch assembly 80 to the drawbar 82 and lift arms 84 of a tractor (not shown). In FIG. [[7]] 8 the hitch assembly 80 is advanced toward the tractor, or the tractor is backed toward the hitch assembly, achieving relative movement between the tractor and the hitch assembly in the direction indicated by the arrow 90. The clevis bar 22 at the forward end of the hitch assembly 80 engages the drawbar 82 of the tractor, as shown in FIG. [[8]] 9. In FIG. [[9]] 10 the lift arms 84 of the tractor are pivoted outward, in the direction indicated by the arrows 92. The hitch stabilizer 40 slides forward on the lower hitch tube 20 in the direction indicated by the arrows 94. In FIG. [[10]] 11, the lift arms 84 pivot back to their normal positions as indicated by the arrows 96, and the lift arms couple to the lift pins 46 on the hitch stabilizer 40.

Please insert the following new paragraph ahead of the paragraph that begins at page 9, line 15:

Referring now to FIGS. 12-14, the hitch assembly 80 is illustrated coupling a towing vehicle, in this case a Ford agricultural tractor 100, to a towed implement, more specifically, a sprayer 102. The hitch 10 is mounted to the drawbar 82 and lift arms 84 of the tractor 100 in the manner explained above with respect to FIGS. 8-11. The hitch pivot 12 is attached to a forward end of the frame of the sprayer 102. A driveshaft 104 driven by the power take-off of the tractor provides power to the sprayer. The driveshaft 104 couples to a universal joint 106 at the forward end of the sprayer 102 to permit pivoting movement between the tractor 100 and the sprayer 102. The universal joint 106 is located along the axis defined by the two pivot bolts 65, 67 of the hitch assembly 80. Thus the driveshaft 104 pivots about the same pivot

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point 35 as the hitch assembly 80, making possible extreme turning angles between the tractor 100 and the sprayer 102 without the hitch assembly interfering with the driveshaft.

AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

The applicant submits herewith a complete set of formal drawings for consideration by the Examiner.

Attachment: Formal Drawings (9 pages – FIGS. 1-14).